California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Humboldt - Del Norte Unit



Fire Management Plan 2004

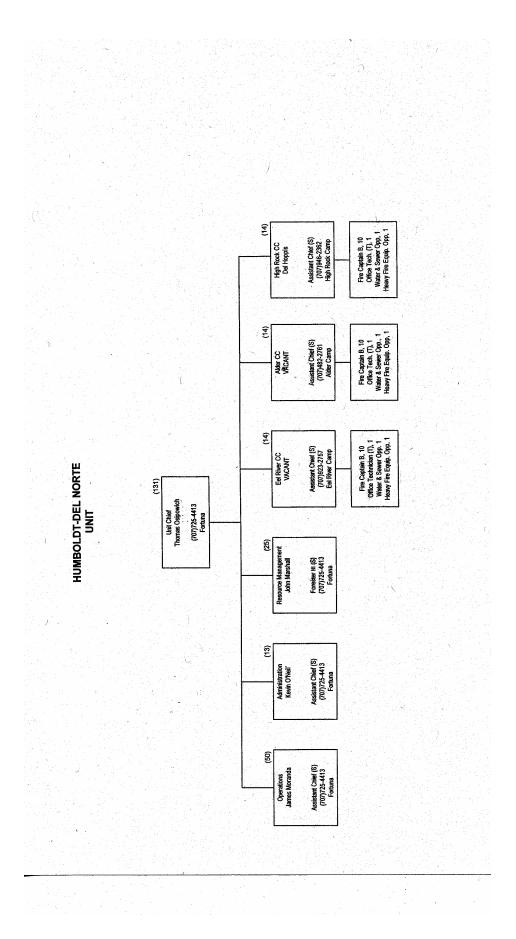


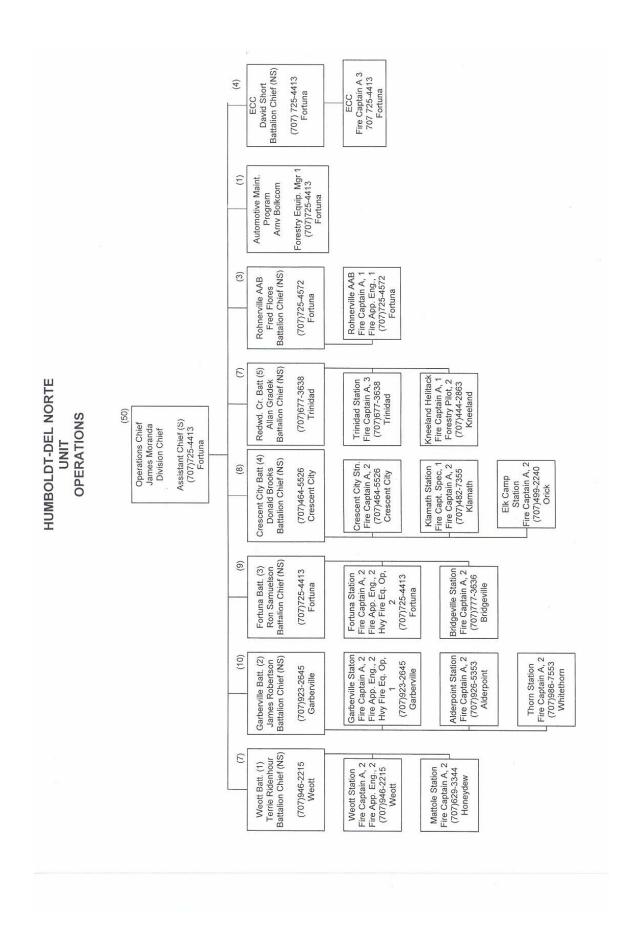
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Thomas Osipowich		
Unit Chief		
Humboldt Del Norte Unit		
Humboldt County Fire Warden		
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Chairman		
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors		
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Jack Reese	Date:	
Chairman		
Del Norte County Board of Supervisors		
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	Date:	
Robert Reiss		
Chairman		
Trinity County Board of Supervisors		
	Date:	
Gary Riesling	Date.	
Hoopa Fire Management		
USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs		
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William Metz		
Forest Supervisor USFS Six Rivers National Forest		
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Linda Roushe		
Arcata and King Range Area Manager		
USDI Bureau of Land Management		
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William Pierce	2	
Park Superintendent		
USDI Redwood National Park		
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Evans Cook	Date:	
Chairman		
Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council		

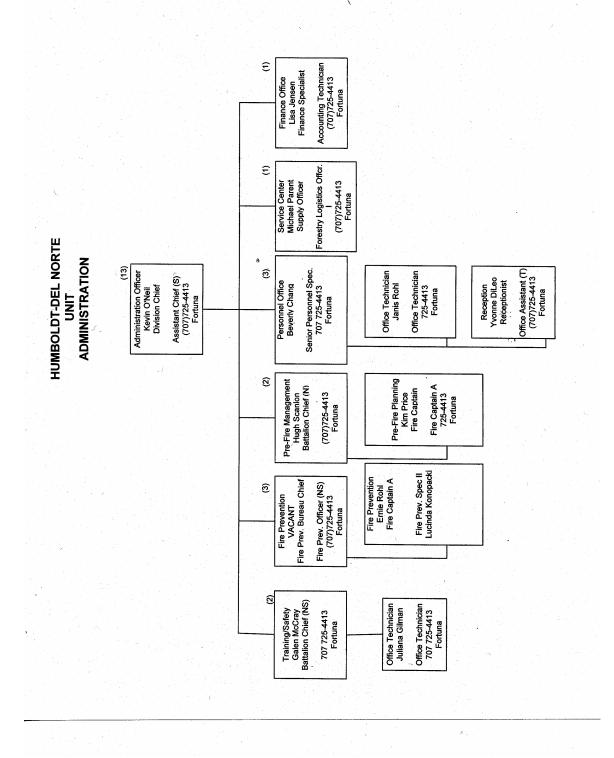
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Mishka Straka		
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Dan Leavitt	Date: _	
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Jessie Cox	Date: _	
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Trinity County Fire Safe Council		
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Ed Duggin		
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Willow Creek Fire Safe Council		
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Van Duzen / Bridgeville Fire Safe Council		

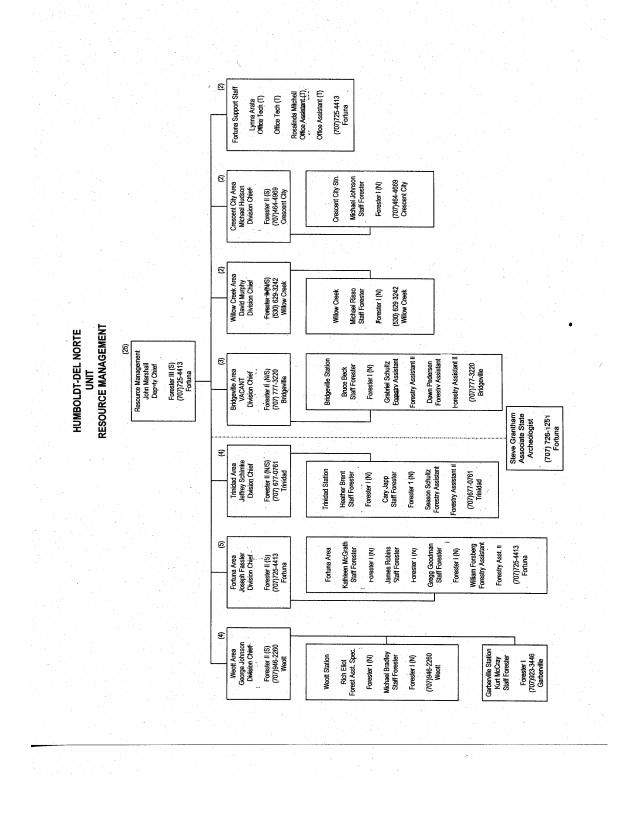
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California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Humboldt Del Norte Unit Fire Management Plan

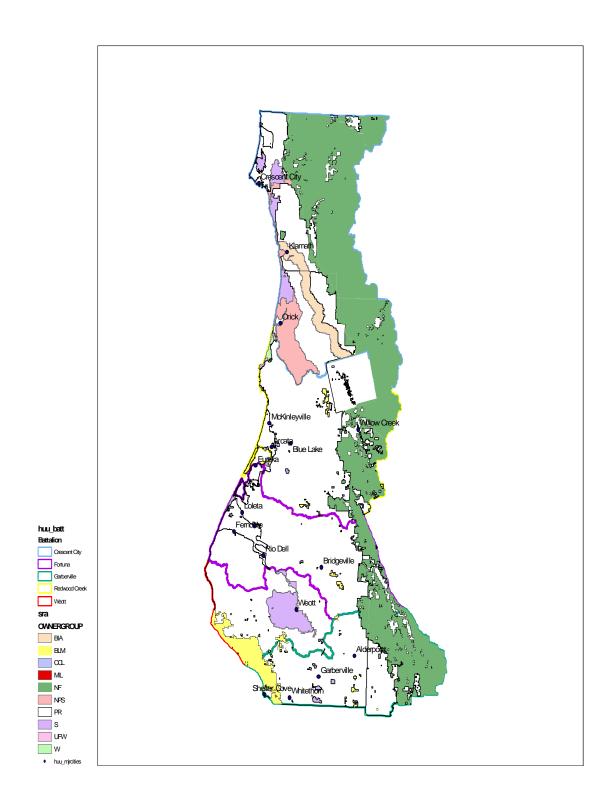
Executive Summary

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) Humboldt Del Norte Unit is remotely located representing the most northern Unit along the California coastline. The Unit extends north to south approximately 180 miles and inland approximately 50 miles. This encompasses 1,941,991 acres of state responsibility lands and 1,963,581 of direct protection area. Approximately 70% of these lands are zoned for timber production and another 10% are recreation areas. Several watersheds exist within the lands including the Smith, Klamath, Mad, Trinity, Van Duzen, Mattole and Eel Rivers. Humboldt and Del Norte counties are home to not only the world's tallest living trees, but also the largest remaining stands of old growth coast redwood. Many of these stands are protected in parks and recreational areas. These include 11 State Parks, 20 County parks and beaches, Redwood National Park, United States Forest Service (USFS) Six Rivers National Forest and the newly acquired Headwaters Forest. The livelihood of these counties is dependent on the resources the land itself has to offer both in the form of timber production and recreation. In addition many of the smaller landowners manage their land for both timber production and ranching.

The Unit is culturally diverse as well. Twelve tribal agencies reside within the unit including the Hoopa, which boasts the largest Native American reservation in California. The Yurok, Wiotts, Karuk and Tawolla are some of the other tribes that are represented within the area.

Humboldt and Del Norte counties each have an urban interface dilemma as well. Del Norte County main population centers are Gasquet, Crescent City and Klamath. Many of the residents live in rural areas. Humboldt County has an even greater risk of experiencing an urban interface fire. The population centers include Trinidad, McKinleyville, Blue Lake, Arcata, Eureka, Loleta, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, and Garberville. Additionally there exist numerous other smaller communities. Any of these communities could experience an interface fire.

Any of these aspects become key components in the Units Fire Management Plan. Ultimately the plan will balance the needs of the many stakeholders involved. The Fire Management Plan considers the needs of timber production, recreation, ranching, wildlife enhancement, cultural needs and fire hazard reduction. The area in itself is so diverse in it's existence and needs, that the management plan must be diverse and able to accommodate all facets of land management.



Humboldt-Del Norte Unit
Ownership by Battalion

California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection

Humboldt - Del Norte Unit

2003 Statistics

Agency	Wildland Responsibility	Direct Protection	Acreage Difference	
	Total Acres	Total Acres		
CDF	1,941,991	1,963,581	21,590	
CDF Wildland Contract	520*			
Hoopa (HIA)	90,666	90,851	185	
BIA	9,544			
LRA	87,196	86,676	520*	
BLM	80,569			
Redwood NPS	80,457	80,457		
Six Rivers NF	1,002,752	1,069,120	66,368	

DPA Breakdown:	CDF	Six Rivers NF
Arcata Jacoby Cr Forest:	520*	
CDF:	1,841,547	100,334
BIA:	9,013	531
BLM:	80,556	13
Six Rivers NF:	31,945	968,242
	1,963,581	1,069,120

Fire History

In order to fully understand the goal of the fire management plan, it is important to understand the history of fire in the area. Fire has long been a part of Humboldt and Del Norte counties. During the pre-settlement period (before 1875) the Native American people commonly used fires. The Native Americans found this area to be well suited to their needs. The access to the coast for trading and food, relatively mild temperatures, and the many tributaries provided for fresh water and food. They used fire for several reasons. It helped drive out rodents and insects, kept the forest understory open, which made for easier travel and hunting. Additionally it enhanced the forbs and grasses used in basket weaving. During the settlement period (1875-1897) European settlers used fire for maintenance and enlarging the pasturelands and as a land clearing method. These fires frequently escaped due to the lack of firefighting equipment or knowledge. Major land activities during the post settlement period (1898-1940) were livestock grazing, farming, debarking of the tanoak for tannin production and logging of Douglas Fir and Coast Redwood. Logging was clearly a dominant activity during this time period. Hundreds of small mills existed up and down the coastline; often the mills would have their own railroad for the transportation of the logs as well. In this time of unrefined mechanized equipment the logging operations were simplified as much as possible. Logged areas were burned to assist with the removal of the logs and reduce the logging debris left behind. These fires were left to burn with no real control efforts. The same can be said for the area ranchers who commonly set fire to their land in order to maintain the grazing. This resulted in many, large fires that are documented in area newspapers from 1880 to 1952.

Many studies have been conducted on the fire frequency of the Coast Redwood. Accordingly there are varying thoughts on the fire frequency. There is also a notable difference between the northern portion of the Unit verses the southern area. Estimates for the Redwoods in the northern portion of the Unit suggest a 50 to 100-year fire cycle. While in the southern portion of the unit the fire frequency is estimated to be 12 to 50 years. Reviews of area newspapers and various studies at Humboldt State University indicate that there was indeed a significant fire history from the late 1800's through early 1950's. Of note are 24 "fire seasons" between 1880 and 1952. During this time period the fire interval was 3.3 years. Accounts from these fires included entire towns being burned, such as the 1908 fire that destroyed the town of Luffenholz. People were left homeless, local mills and railroad tracks all perished from these large severe fires. After 1945 the severity and number of fires began to decline significantly. This was due, in part to two separate happenings. The State Forest Practice Act changed the manner in which lands were managed, which led to the curtailing and changing of logging activities. Secondly, World War II had taken the work force over seas; with the return of the soldiers came a active fire suppression program.



Luffenholtz , California. Near the present town of Westhaven
After the 1908 fire

A Season on the Mountain

George W. Herron

Pratt Mountain Lookout is on the highest elevation in central Southern Humboldt, located between the Eel River, and about eleven winding upgrade miles east of Garberville. The year was 1931, and the Great Depression was hurting a lot of people, including me. Now there was an opportunity for a summer's work, watching for and spotting fires, and I would be part of the California State Fire Suppression work force.

As we drove up the narrow steep road and approached the crest of Pratt Mountain, there was mute evidence that a fire had swept over the area, leaving blackened trees and stubs, a melted down stove, bed rails, pots and pans, thoroughly burned. I was impressed by the apparent lack of safety on the job. At the top we found a cabin built of redwood lumber and shakes. A few yards from the cabin stood the rustic 30-foot tower, four poles placed in a square and leaning to the center around an oak tree, with a board platform on top. On the north side of this tower, a sturdy pole ladder provided a way to climb to the top and plenty of exercise.

At that time we had no instruments for zeroing in on fires. One must know the names of the ranches, streams, mountains, and various landmarks. The rangers emphasized the importance of reporting or turning in a fire as quickly as possible. So, on sighting an unidentified smoke or blaze of fire, I would race down the ladder into the cabin and crank the telephone, so many longs and shorts. Headquarters would dispatch a crew to control the fire. Yes, the facilities were primitive, but the view was beautiful: King's Peak, to the west, by the Pacific Ocean, Iaqua Buttes to the north, Southfork Mountains to the east, and Iron

Peak to the south. When a heavy fog rolled in, it resembled a giant carpet, draped over the hills and valleys, with a few mountain peaks poking their heads through, like islands in a sea of white fluff.

How can one describe the magic of stars at high altitude, their apparent closeness, numerous falling stars, all twinkling and sparkling in the clear thin air? What a delight to sleep under the stars, or in the light of a full moon. To wake from a sound sleep and see a handsome buck deer standing nearby, looking intently in your direction, a truly rewarding experience. I thoroughly enjoyed rising early, and when the fire situation was quiet, tried stalking deer in their beds. I once followed a family of skunks up the trail, at a distance. Thunder and lightning storms were exciting, with the flashing and crashing all around you. Nature's spectacle was awe inspiring as well as downright scary.

The summer of 1931 was a busy fire season because of the dryness and the Klamath weed problem. Ranchers were spraying and burning in their efforts to control the weed. Later of course, the famous Australian beetle ate the Klamath weed into submission.

The late October rains came and the season was over. This lonesome young man of 21 was glad to see home and friends again.

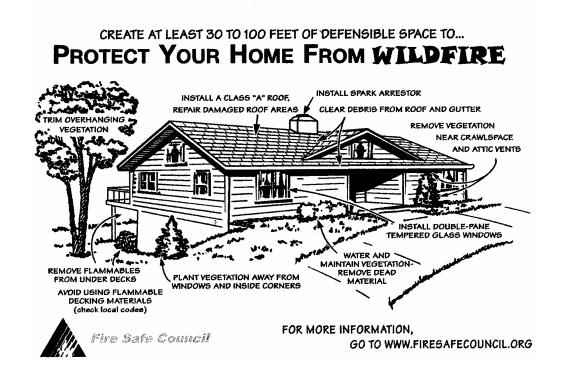


Humboldt – Del Norte Unit Headquarters Fortuna, California Circa 1945

Stakeholders

Who they are

Many stakeholders exist within the Unit. The demographics of the area lends itself to many special interest groups with a wide array of needs. Generally speaking the stakeholders are represented by government entities, private land stewards (both large and small), rural and interface homeowners and special interest groups. Among the government entities include State Parks, Humboldt and Del Norte County Parks, Bureau of Land Management, Six Rivers National Forest, Redwood National Park, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Hoopa Valley Reservation, Department of Fish and Game, North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District, Shelter Cove Resort Improvement District, the City of Arcata, Weott Consolidated Sanitary District, and Humboldt Fire District #1. Numerous stakeholders have varying amounts of land that is managed in one way or another for their livelihood and for their future. Large timber companies include Simpson Timber, Pacific Lumber Company and Sierra Pacific Industries. Other smaller timber companies include; Barnum Timber, and Eel River Sawmills. Included in the landowner group is a number of smaller landowner who utilizes their land for both logging and ranching. The Cattlemen's Association and the Farm Bureau generally represent this group. Special interest groups include the tribal councils of the Karuk, Yurok, Hoopa and the Northern California Basketweavers Association. The Mattole Restoration Council (MRC), Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) and the Institute of Sustainable Forest (ISF) are very active groups within the community that are aggressively pursuing fuels reduction issues and community



Active Fire Safe Councils

- Ave of the Giants
- Southern Humboldt
- Orleans/Somes Bar
- Del Norte County
- Trinity County
- Humboldt County
- Lower Mattole
- Willow Creek
- Van Duzen / Bridgeville

Potential Fire Safe Councils

Westhaven / Trinidad

Shelter Cove

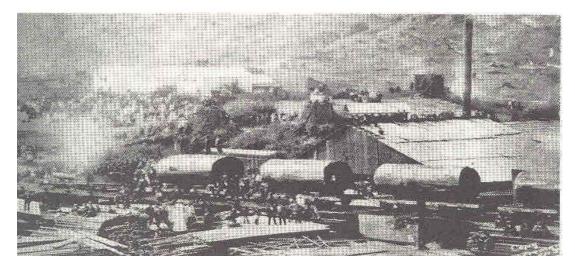


Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council monthly meeting.

Key Issues

Key issues have been identified by the Unit. As stakeholders become more involved in the planning process a greater amount of input is expected. Some of the key issues currently identified include:

- Promote adequate fire protection and fire safe standards to be incorporated into the Humboldt and Del Norte County Master Fire Protection Plans.
- Support and promote the county level Fire Safe Councils in Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity counties to act as an umbrella for funding, environmental procedures, permits, and insurance for local Fire Safe Councils and Fire Departments.
- Develop, and promote the office of Humboldt County Fire Warden.
- Develop workable management plans with State and Federal cooperators.
- Reconcile Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and United States Forest Service operating agreement due to recent land acquisition.
- Develop Master Mutual Aid plan with local agencies.
- Identify local agency response boundaries within the unit to aid in the quality of service provided.
- Develop unit maps books of suitable standard to aid in the quality of service provided through federal grant dollars.
- Provide input into the National Fire Plan and work cooperatively to achieve goals.
- Provide adequate and appropriate dispatch services to the Unit and it's cooperators.



The John Vance mill and railroad on Mad River. (HSU Library)

Assets at Risk

The Fire Plan assessment is on going process. The assets at risk within the Unit include the following:

- Communities and governmental infrastructure throughout Humboldt, Del Norte and southwestern Trinity Counties
- Recreational value of the many Federal, State, and County Parks
- Timber
- Grazing land
- Watersheds of Smith, Klamath, Trinity, Van Duzen, Mattole, Mad, Eel Rivers
- Scenic and economic value of the old growth Redwoods
- Wildlife habitat
- Large and small scale industry and agriculture



Salmon were once plentiful in the Eel River as shown this photograph of a "Day's Catch"

(HSU Library)

Current Fire Situation

The 2003 statewide declared fire season started on 6/16/03 and ended on 11/30/03. The season shows fires above and acreage below last year and the 5-year average. There had been 7,473 fire fires last year through November 30, 2003. This number includes all fires in State Zone, which includes, CDF direct protection area, local government Contract (Local Response Areas Under Agreement), and other agencies in State Zone. Fire occurrence was less than 1% below 2002, and 3% above the 5-year average. In 2003, fires burned 409,955 acres, which is over 200% above 2002.

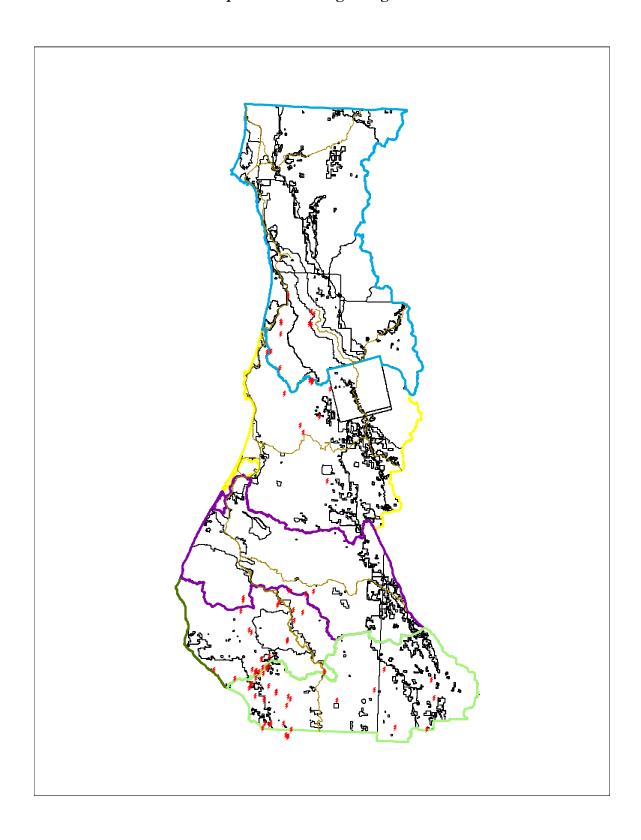
Of the 398 fires in 2003 in the Humboldt-Del Norte Unit (Humboldt, Del Norte, and western Trinity counties) 314 fires were on lands directly protected by CDF. An additional 9 fires were on lands directly protected by CDF, but under a local "Amador" program, 11 fires were on lands directly protected by CDF, but where another agency provided life and property protection, and 29 reports were filed for false alarms. On private lands directly protected by Federal Government Agencies (USFS, BLM, BIA, and NPS) there were 35 total fires.

The largest fire on record for this year (2003) was the Honeydew Creek Fire (CAHUU004545) which started from a lightning storm that rolled through the Unit, leaving 65 separate fires in it's wake, on September 3rd, 2003. This fire consumed 13,777 acres before it was controlled on October 7th, 2003.

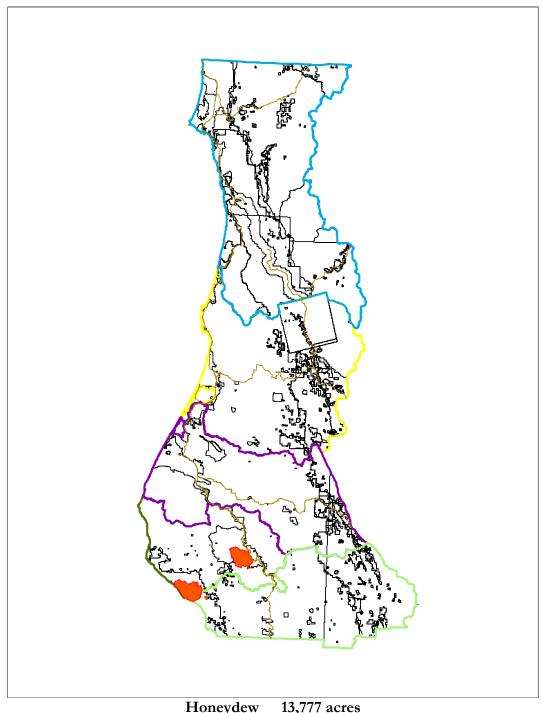


Honeydew Creek Fire: CAHUU004545

Humboldt-Del Norte Unit September 2003 Lightning Series



Humboldt – Del Norte Unit 2003 Major Fire History



Honeydew	13,777 acres
Canoe	11,036 acres
Rainbow	15 acres
Tectah	100 acres
Johnson	5 acres
"10"	212 acres
Ridgewood	15 acres

Ignition Workload Assessment (Level of Service)

The Fire Plan analysis of the level of service is in process for the Humboldt Del Norte Unit.

The Unit as a whole responded to a total of 398 fires in 2003. That was up from the 349 in 2002. From the 2003 fires, 26,587 total acres were consumed in the following categories: 1740 grass, 3215 acres brush, 3452 acres woodland, 18,180 acres timber and 0 acres of agricultural product. Considering the 1,904,745 acres of state responsibility land and 1,962,817 direct protection area that the Humboldt – Del Norte Unit encompasses, 26,587 acres or 1.35% of the DPA, seems like a drop in the bucket, HUU has been fortunate.

HUU has the potential for some rather large catastrophic fires; especially in it's southern and eastern regions. If one were to add the fire history, fuel build up, increase in population and housing, especially in wooded rural areas, you would quickly wonder why it has not happened. With the area becoming more and more popular as an area of scenic beauty, relative low land cost, etc., the risk will continue to grow, especially for the person who wishes to build and reside in remote areas of the Unit.

The Unit is one that has most of its fire protection adjacent to its population centers, leaving vast tracts of the Unit with long response times and very little protection. CDF's fire protection objective states that a system of basic fire protection will be provided so that damage to life, property and natural resources will be held at or below a level acceptable within social, political and economic constraints. Board of Forestry and Fire Protection designates in the California Fire Plan that CDF will strive to contain 95% of all unwanted fire at 10 acres or less.

With a total of eight (8) fires out of the 398 fires that the Unit responded to, being over 10 acres, (2% of total) that equates to a successful year, even with two fires being over 11,000 acres.

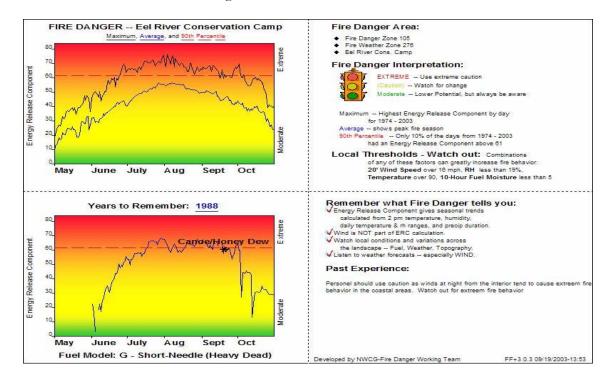
State	Unit	Fire	Year	Fire Name	Agency	Alarm	Control	Control	Cause	Reported	Inc.
	ID	#				Date	Date	Method		Acres	Number
CA	HUU	236	03	Honeydew	CDF	09/04/03	10/07/03	2	1	13,777	00004545
CA	HUU	096	03	Rainbow	CDF	07/06/03	07/10/03	2	14	15	00002975
CA	HUU	242	03	Tectah	CDF	09/04/03	09/06/03	2	1	100	00004570
CA	HUU	245	03	Johnson	CDF	09/04/03	09/05/03	2	1	5	00004583
CA	HUU	231	03	Canoe	CDF	09/03/03	10/07/03	2	1	11,036	00004501
CA	HUU	204	03	"10"	CDF	09/03/03	09/10/03	2	1	212	00004453
CA	HUU	356	03	Ridgewood	CDF	10/19/03	10/25/03	2	7	15	00005556
CA	HUU	266	03	Fox #1	CDF	09/03/03	09/05/03	8	1	17	00004515
CA	HUU	239	03	Neafus	CDF	09/04/03	09/14/03	8	2	20	00004569
CA	HUU	043	03	King	CDF	06/16/03	06/19/03	8	2	4	00002452

HUU and the County of Humboldt have embarked on a fact finding study to address the service gaps within the county and hopefully rectify the problem through funding sources, contracts, etc., as they develop their County Master Fire Protection Plan.

Within Humboldt County, there are 42 total agencies that provide fire service. They are dispersed among 16 Fire Protection Districts, six community service districts, sixteen Volunteer Fire Departments, several Special Districts, the City of Eureka Fire Department, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) and the US Forest Service (USFS). Each has its own fire service area. Mutual aid agreements are common among neighboring fire organizations to assist one another in responding to fire and emergencies. Some rural areas of Humboldt County are not within any fire response area for structural protection, even though they have wildfire protection. USFS provides wildfire protection on Forest Service Lands. CDF provides wildland fire protection on the rest of the lands designates as State Responsibility Area (SRA), unless it is provided by a local fire organization. In addition, CDF's Humboldt-Del Norte Unit Chief serves as the Humboldt County Fire Warden to assist with inspections and arson investigations.

The Humboldt County Master Fire Protection Plan goals area as follows:

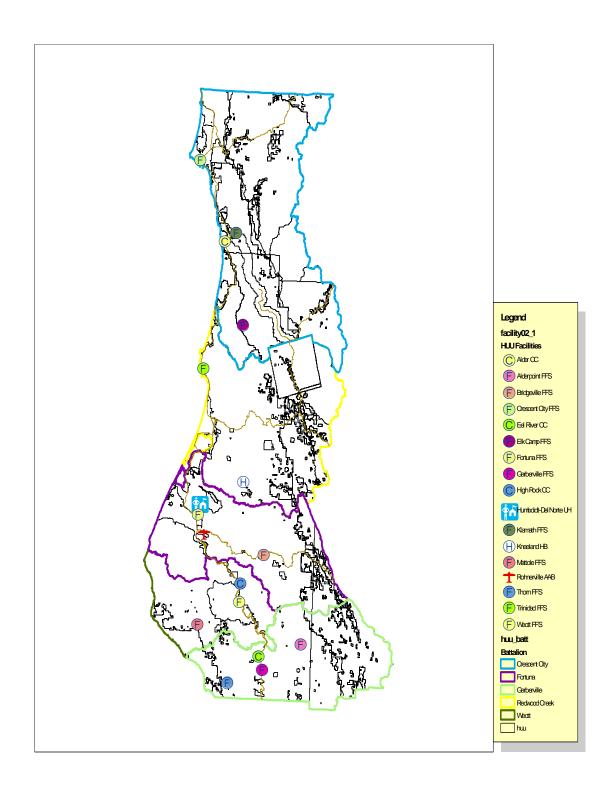
- 1) Assure adequate fire protection for people, property, and communities.
- 2) Support development of local fire organizations and local Fire Safe Councils.
- 3) Encourage effective and risk-based allocation of fire prevention and suppression services.
- 4) Encourage local efforts to reduce or mitigate fire fuel loads for community fire prevention and protection.
- 5) Promote local fire safe planning and education programs.
- 6) Support fire prevention and resource protection funding and technical assistance efforts of local fire organization and communities.



The Humboldt – Del Norte Unit is composed of eleven fire stations, three camps, one air attack base, and one helitack base. CDF HUU maintains 14 frontline engines, with two engines in reserve, two dozers, 15 inmate crews, one helicopter, one air attack, and one air tanker for fire suppression efforts. There are approximately 100 permanent fire suppression personnel, 30 resource management personnel, and 6 clerical personnel to staff these efforts. Additionally the Unit hires 50 limited term personnel to supplement the permanent staff during the fire season.

The Inter-agency dispatch center, not only dispatches fire, law enforcement, and EMS calls for the Six Rivers National Forest, and The Humboldt – Del Norte Unit, but also for 29 volunteer fire departments,1 ambulance company, Redwood National Park and the Bureau of Land Management's Kings Range National Conservation Area. In 2003 the ECC dispatched a total of 6700 calls.



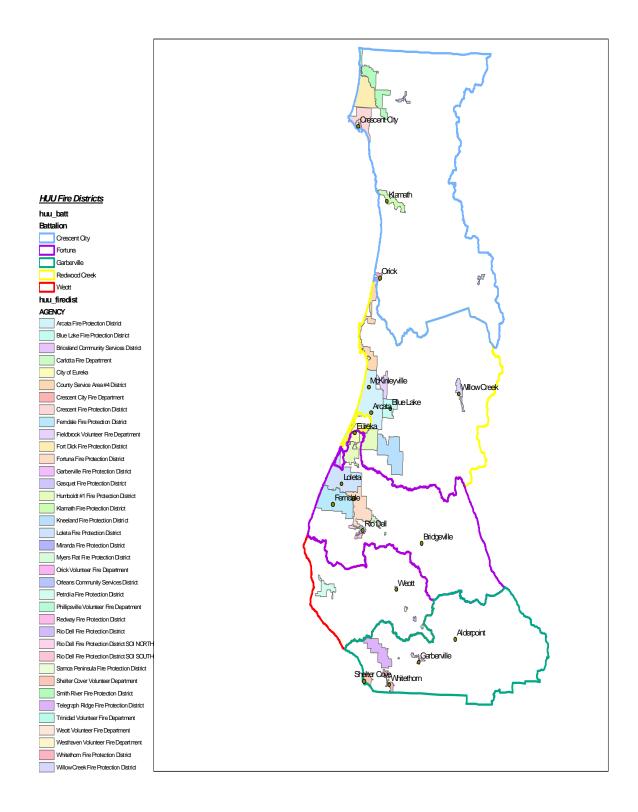


Humboldt – Del Norte Unit Facilities

Local Fire Organizations Providing Service in the Humboldt-Del Norte Unit

City Fire Dept.	HUMBOLDT	DEL NORTE	TRINITY
Ony The Bept.	Eureka	Crescent City	
Fire Protection Dist		32000000	
Fire Protection Dist	Arcata Blue Lake Ferndale Fortuna Garberville Humboldt Fire Dist.# Kneeland Loleta Myers Flat Petrolia Redway Rio Dell Samoa Peninsula	Crescent Fork Dick Smith River Hiouchi	
	Telegraph Ridge Whitethorn		
	Willow Creek		
Volunteer Fire Dept			
	Briceland Fruitland Honeydew Korbel Maple Creek Nielson Ranch Orleans Palo Verde Prosper Ridge Redcrest Salmon Creek Scotia Shelter Cove Sprowl Creek Trinidad Westhaven Whale Gulch	Gasquet Klamath	Kettenpom Salyer Burnt Ranch Hawkins Bar S. Trinity Van Duzen
Community Services	s Dist.		
	Carlotta/Riverside Fieldbrook Miranda Phillipsville Orick Weott		

Other Special Dist.



Humboldt-Del Norte Unit Fire Districts by Battalion

Fuels

The Fire Plan analysis of fuels has been completed for the Humboldt Del Norte Unit. While an actual rating for the fuels is available, some general statements can be made based on local knowledge of the fuels.

The Unit is predominately mixed conifer forest (NFDRS Fuel model G) or Fire Behavior Fuel Model 10. This model consists of, Coast Redwood, Douglas Fir, Spruce with intermingled hardwoods including Madrone and Tanoak. A key component within this fuel type is the large amount of down and dead woody fuel. This vegetation type occurs in three zones. The coastal strip consists of Coast Redwood, Douglas Fir and Spruce. This is a closed canopy forest with a thick, lush understory of brush. The biomass in this fuel type is equal to or greater than a rainforest. In fact it is not uncommon to have a true Redwood forest referred to as a rainforest. The second zone occurs inland where the Douglas Fir dominates and resides with the above mentioned hardwoods. This results in a more open canopy with a sparser understory. The third zone occurs in the most southeastern portions of the unit, where the fuel is that of a typical Oak Woodland. The understory is open and consists of grass and brush (chaparral).

The following set of photographs depict a cross section of the vegetation types within the Humboldt-Del Norte Unit.

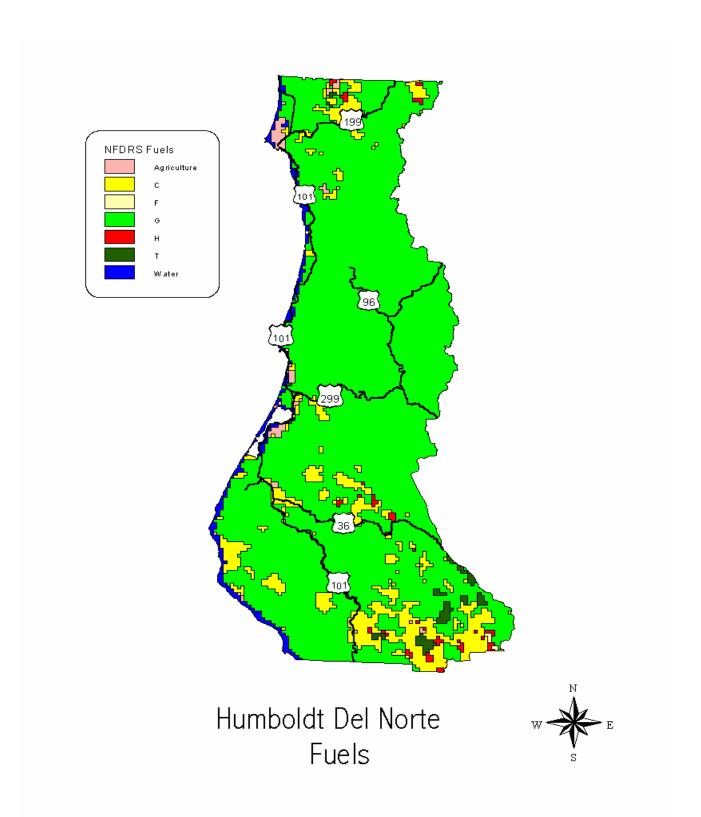












Fire Weather

The Fire Plan analysis of the frequency of severe fire weather has been developed. The business plan that addresses the validation process was completed this last spring.

The current methodology used for the fire weather analysis portion of the plan prohibits this unit from accurately capturing the severity ranking (does not pass the laugh test). The current method requires 24-hour weather observations from a remote automated weather station. The data currently available to this unit is not accurate enough to meet the current needs. The unit has used various options in order to mitigate this problem, in particular the use of Fire Family plus to tabulate existing weather data from our weather stations set in National Fire Danger Rating Zones, as addressed in the Unit Weather plan.

Using local knowledge and research work done at Humboldt State University we can define when and under what conditions severe fire weather occurs. The unit is also fortunate to have a good database (dating back to 1974) of weather observations from the Eel River manual weather observation station.

Three major synoptic weather systems are associated with large fires in the Humboldt Del Norte Unit. They are the Pacific High (post-frontal), the Great Basin High and the Subtropical High Aloft pattern. These patterns can be expected to occur 50-55 days in the summer months, with the greatest number of days occurring in July, August or September.



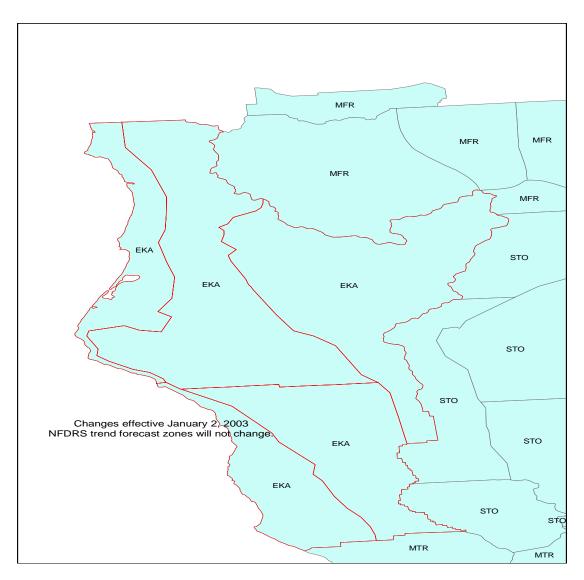
National Weather Service, Eureka weather Office, Woodley Island, California

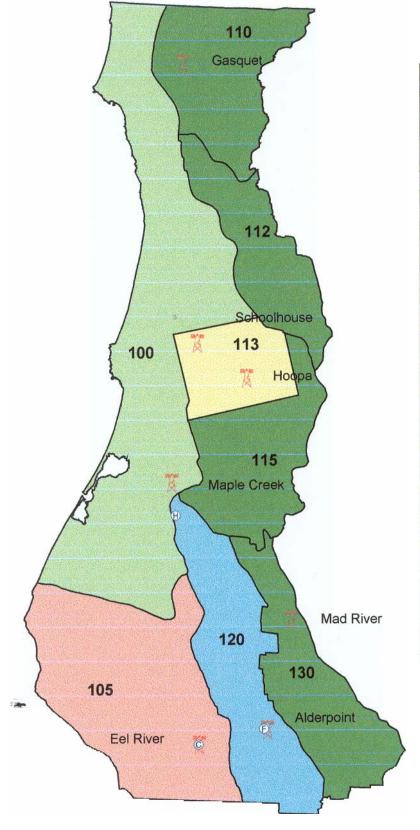
National Weather Service

As of January 1st, 2003 the National Weather Service has moved all daily fire weather forecasting from Redding to the Eureka office. All spot weather forecasts will be requested through the Eureka office at their main web page: http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Eureka, with exception of those that are related to smoke management issues (Vegetation Management Program burns, etc.) In those cases, spot weather forecasts will be routed through the Redding office. This change will affect all areas of the unit that fall under CDF responsibility. Spot weather forecasts can be posted at http://www.wrh.noaa.gov./cgi-bin/wrspot/spotmon?site=eka.

Eureka Fire Weather Zones

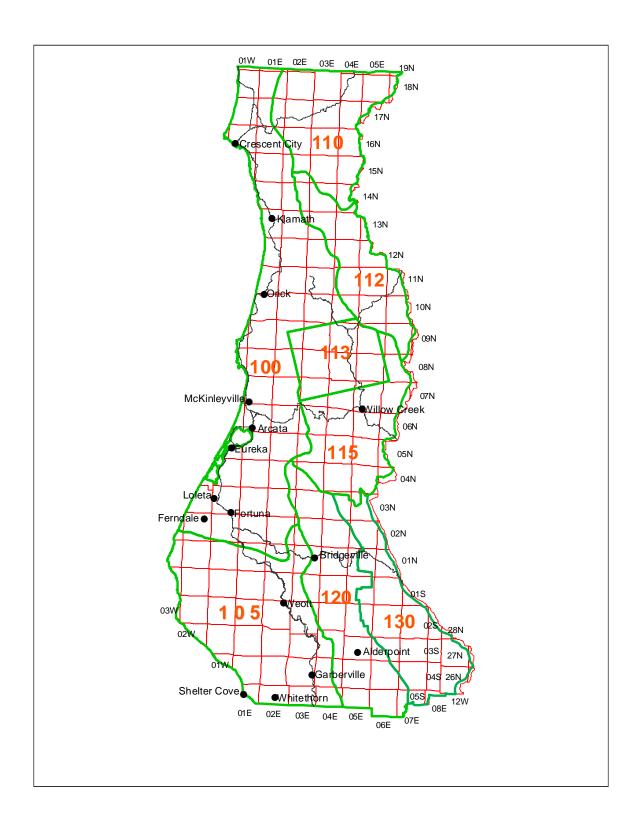
EKA= Eureka MFR= Medford STO= Sacramento MTR= Monterey





RAWS & Field Reporting Locations





National Fire Danger Rating Zones

Priority Areas

Description of priority areas

• Cathey Road / Avenue of the Giants

The Avenue of the Giants Corridor is located in the Southern portion of the Unit. The area extends from Pepperwood to Philpsville and has many small communities along its path. Property ownership is a checkerboard of Humboldt Redwoods State Park and private property. There are many homes in this area as well as the old growth Redwoods, parks and rivers.

• Shelter Cove

Located in the southwestern portion of the Unit, this area is a resort district with a hazardous fuel buildup. Additionally, this area is subject to a strong on shore wind that is fierce at times and is can be accompanied by low humidities. Shelter Cove is a high use recreation area in the summer, not only for it's ocean water sports but it also serves visitors to the King Range Conservation Area and the famous Lost Cost.

Mattole Valley/Prosper Ridge/Wilder Ridge

Many small communities represented this area. The potential for a large damaging fire in this area is significant. The fire history is also significant, some of the largest fires in the Unit have occurred in this area. This area has an apparent microclimate that supports the more extreme aspects of fire weather.

Arcata Community Forest

The Arcata Community Forest is situated on the boundary of the City of Arcata. This area presents an interface problem to the many neighboring residents, Humboldt State University and the Pacific Northwest Experimental Station. The forest is a popular recreation area for residents throughout Humboldt County and is often host to many social events. The exclusion of fire has led to a hazardous fuel build up as well an unhealthy forest.

Humboldt Redwoods State Park

The Humboldt Rewdoods State Park extends from Pepperwood to Garberville along the Hwy 101 corridor. There are 52,000 acres within the park boundaries, of which 17,000 acres are old growth Coast Redwood. The park is well known for its enormous old growth Redwood trees, many campgrounds and waterways. Humboldt Redwoods State

Park is one of the counties feature attractions. Over 750,000 people come from all over the world to visit the park each year. The park has had an active prescribed burning program for many years and seeks to maintain that program with the cooperative efforts of the Unit.

• Klamath River Drainage

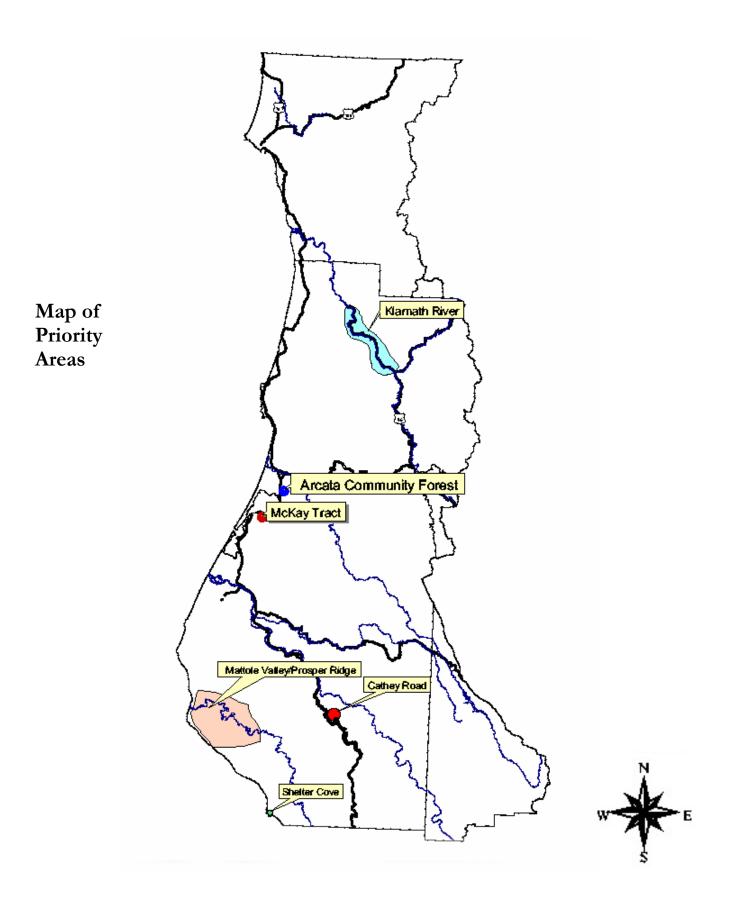
This area is located "down river" from the Hoopa Reservation on Hwy 96 and represents the most easterly portion of the Unit. It is an area that is home to people from many different Native American tribes including the Yurok. This area has a significant fire history. While the population density is sparse the resources that stand to be lost are tremendous. This includes the Klamath watershed and associated wildlife as well as timber. Additionally, prescribed burning helps facilitate the collection of hazel stick and bear grass, key components to Native American basket weaving. This is a critical asset to maintaining the disappearing craft of the culture.

McKay Tract

Located on the northeastern fringes of the City of Eureka, this area creates an interface problem. Many housing subdivisions back up to open forest that is zoned timber production and is being logged. The logging not only changes the fuel hazard type, but the activity itself can contribute to fire "starts". The Unit and Humboldt Fire District typically control one or two fires a year within this general area.

DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS

Each target area has some unique assets that is targeted for one reason or another, however in a general sense the goals are the same. The reality is that we cannot "fix" the problems it took 50 years to create. With this thought in mind we aim to increase public awareness of the conditions that do exist in hopes of spurring stakeholder interest in taking a more active role in the process. For many areas we hope to reduce the fire hazard through fuel reduction and increase public and firefighter safety, by helping improve the means of egress. Additionally we hope to improve or maintain the many ecosystems that surround us in order to maintain the quality of life for the residents of Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity counties. This would include cultural burning to help maintain the Native American culture.



Area Accomplishments

Humboldt County

Humboldt County Fire Safe Council has received approximately \$25,000 which went to the County of Humboldt Community Development for council administration and formation. The FSC is in the process, along with the Humboldt County Planning Department and it's contractor, of developing the County's Master Fire Protection Plan, which is an major part of the overall operating plan for the county. The council is discussing gaps in fire protection service areas, Fire Department funding and staffing problems, along with other issues. Through the use of the plan, the County will be able to see where the critical need for improvement in the areas of fire protection, fuel reduction, education, and other needs exist.

Cathey Rd.

The residents of the Cathey Road area have voiced their concern regarding the fuel build up that surrounds their community as well as their limited options of egress. The group has built a community fire prevention sign to display educational and informational items for local residents.

In cooperation with the Humboldt Redwood State Parks, CDF crews have completed a fuel reduction project along Cathey Road to improve ingress and egress for local residents in case emergency evacuation is warranted.



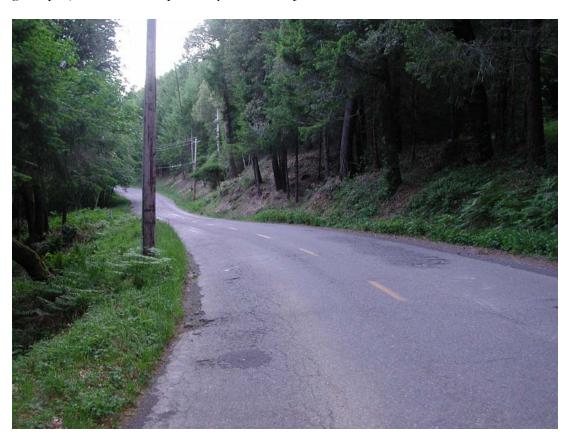
Cathey Road Fuel Reduction Project

• Shelter Cove

Shelter Cove has an ongoing vegetation reduction project to remove the hazardous fuel buildup that exists on undeveloped areas within the Cove. This poses a great threat to the residents who live the area. It is a tremendous task that will not be completed for some time to come. The methods being used are very labor intensive and difficult due to extended drive times for the conservation camp crews.

In July 2002, the Shelter Cove Recreation Improvement District (RID) started levying fees through a local ordinance to landowners within the cove who do not comply with brush abatement on their lots. The Humboldt – Del Norte Unit (HUU) is actively encouraging the start up of a Fire Safe Council (FSC) in the area to assist with future efforts and funding.

The Unit has applied for a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) grant through the Bureau of Land Management to construct a shaded fuel break from the Thorn Junction on Shelter Cove Road into the community of Shelter Cove. This fuel break would connect with fuel breaks being constructed by BLM, and local Fire Safe Councils. The completed fuel breaks would create a buffer to potentially slow future fire spread into the area. The grant project will be completed by the 30th of June 2004.



Shelter Cove Shaded Fuel Break Project

Arcata Community Forest

The City of Arcata has two parcels of land that present not only a fire hazard to the area residents, but are also a recreational and watershed value to them. Should a large fire occur here the losses could be tremendous. Currently the fire access roads and the forest itself are so over grown it is difficult for the public to enjoy. The City would like to manage the land with both thinning projects and prescribed fire. They have already made efforts to open fire access roads using conservation camp crews. The city has had some funding for this project and has used CCC and CDF conservation camp crews to date. This would most likely be labor intensive and done over an extended period of time. Additional funding will be sought through a grant process.

A Wildland Urban Interface grant was awarded in the year 2000, and a chipper was purchased to assist CDF crews with the brush abatement efforts in the forest. In May of 2002 crews completed the matching fund time assigned to the grant. Although the grant is completed, work still remains to be done.

The Unit applied for an additional WUI grant through the Bureau of Land Management, to continue the fuel reduction work. The project will be completed on June 30th, 2004.



Arcata Community Forest Shaded Fuel Break Project

• Mattole Valley/Prosper Ridge/Wilder Ridge

This is another area of hazardous fuel build up, extreme fire history, and sparse population.

In 2002 the Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council (FSC) was formed and began meeting with the residents in "Neighborhood Meetings" to address major project areas in the valley and surrounding communities. Through a \$13,000 grant to the Mattole Restoration Council from the USFS Economic Recovery Program the FSC has begun work on the Lower Mattole Fire Management Plan, held public outreaches and education workshops.

In May of 2003 we received word that the Lower Mattole FSC had been funded for three fuel break projects that they had applied for through the Bureau of Land Management in the Petrolia, Panther Gap, and Wilder Ridge areas totally \$136,000.

The Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council has been an active force in the area, promoting fire safety, and education through fuel reduction projects and seminars.



Vegetation reduction project done on private lands, in cooperation with the Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council

• Klamath River Area

Low intensity prescribed fire, performed under VMP contracts has been meeting the goals of this area and will continue to be used. The cultural burns these VMPs Cover, help maintain a way of life for local Native Americans basket weavers.

The Orleans/Somes Bar Fire Safe Council (FSC) was very active in 2002 acquiring grants amounting to \$40,000 for planning, fuels reduction, and restoration. They hired a 6 person brushing crew to carry out the removal of vegetation, starting with a shaded fuel break around the community of Orleans. They received a grant of \$160,000 from the USFS for the purchase of a chipper and a 4x4 tractor to aid the brush removal crew in their efforts.

In 2003 the Orleans/Somes Bar FSC has maintained a close working relationship with the Six Rivers National Forest.. Through these efforts they have been able to develop projects benefit and protect the community that they live in. This is especially significant due to their remote proximity from other areas and resources. They arte still receiving grant monies to fund these projects, using their fuel reduction crew and equipment.

The Yurok Tribe in 2002 organized a Volunteer Fire Department in the community of Weitchpec for the protection of area residents in that community and down river.



Orleans/Somes Bar Fire Safe Council fuel reduction project

McKay Tract

This will be a cooperative fuel reduction effort with Simpson Timber Company. Area residents will be encouraged to get involved where they can. This area would benefit the most from fuel reduction efforts by both the residents and Simpson Timber Company.

As of this writing there are no plans for the formation of a Fire Safe Council in this area.

Trinity River Area

This area is located from the Six Rivers National Forest / Trinity National Forest boundary just west of the community of Burnt Ranch on Hwy 299. Although the land ownership is predominately USFS, there are areas of private land and several communities within the area. The area has a significant fire history in it's own right. While the population density is clustered in three major areas Willow Creek, Hawkins Bar/Denny, Salyer the resources that stand to be lost would be tremendous. This includes the Trinity watershed, associated wildlife, as well as timber.

The Willow Creek Fire Safe Council (FSC) has lost their grant of \$10,000 for administration and planning from the Six Rivers National Forest due to inactivity. As of this writing, there has not been any word as to whether the Fire Safe Council will reform.

Del Norte County

The Del Norte County Fire Safe Council (FSC) started up three year ago as a group of concerned citizens with local fire chief support. The FSC has grown to the point that they are addressing proposed projects, raising funds through grants, gifts, etc., completing projects, taken issues to the County Board of Supervisors and are now in the process of formulating a county wide fire plan.

As a council, they have identified five population areas Crescent City, Klamath, Hiouchi, Gasquet, and Low Divide in which to focus their efforts for projects. The Low Divide was the first area to be addressed as a test case.

In 2002 the FSC received monies for the County RAC to install ten 2500 gallon water tanks in the community of Hiochi to augment the community's fire suppression efforts. There are future plans to install additional water tanks in the communities of Klamath, Smith River, Gasquet, and Low Divide.

The FSC along with CDF and local landowners (Hambro Timber Products) have initiated a fuel reduction project along Hwy 101 from Sand Mine Road (south of Crescent City) to the Crescent City limits. This area has become an over grown area with great potential for fire starts that could endanger the local community and residents.

Additionally the FSC along with Simpson Timber Company, have proposed a shaded fuel break to be constructed along Johnson Ridge. The project would divide the lands managed by Redwood National Park and private lands. The eleven mile fuel break would help slow the progress of fire starts from spreading to adjacent inaccessible privately owned areas.



Hambro Timber Products / Hwy 101 VMP Crescent City, California Del Norte County



Del Norte County Fire Safe Council Fire Suppression Water Tank Project Gasquet, California

Trinity County

The Trinity County Fire Safe Council (FSC) is actively identifying and prioritizing fuel reduction projects within their area of influence. The Unit is proceeding to adopt and support those projects within it's boundaries. (Trinity River area and Southern Trinity County) The Unit has been attending meetings on a regular basis, and has given input and support where it can.

One of the major programs that the FSC has put together for the benefit of local Fire Departments and the education of the public at large is the **"BIG RED TRUCK PROJECT"**.

Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is providing money from the Secure Schools and Community Self-determination Act of 2000 to support the Volunteer Fire Department Fire Safe Project. Volunteer Firefighters will complete a simple form that will give each landowner an idea of how safe their property is and recommendations for improving the property against fire. At the same time, other fire safe and fuels reduction information will be given to the landowner to help them implement the recommendations. "Having a Big Red Truck" coming down your road or driveway is about the best way I know of demonstrating the critical need for adequate access for emergency vehicles, including sufficient turnaround space, clearance, and bridge strength", said Jesse Cox, Chairman of the Volunteer Fire Chiefs' Association. This program provides an excellent opportunity for the Volunteer Fire Departments to provide one on one landowner outreach and education regarding fire safety and emergency access, and the volunteer departments receive much needed funds to support their departments. The 16 Volunteer Fire Departments will be paid \$25 per assessment completed in the wildland/urban interface zone up to a maximum of \$5000 per department, or 200 house calls.



Action Plan

The Unit's action plan is identified by three categories. Completed projects are those that have been completed this current year. Ongoing projects are those that currently exist under a Vegetation Management Program (VMP) or funded through a Wildland Urban Interface grant (WUI) and are assumed to be ongoing with a contract renewal over the next 5-year period. Planned projects are those that are either in a VMP contract, WUI grant application stage or in an alternative cooperative fuel reduction effort. Some planned projects are in the concept stage only. It should be noted that the following list of projects are only those being under taken by the Humboldt - Del Norte Unit and do not reflect the many projects that the Unit's local Fire Safe Councils are involved with on their own.

Completed Projects

• Humboldt County Community Chipper Program: **2BHUUCHIPHUM1**

This 2002 Wildland Urban Interface grant, in the amount of \$27,658.00 funded through the Bureau of Land Management, was used to purchase a chipper, and to supply crews to chip brush and woody debris that residents had removed from around their homes in prioritized high fire risk areas within Humboldt County. Additional target areas within the county that received high public use were also done. The grant project was completed in March of 2004, with a total of 150 acres chipped, 200+ homes protected by brush removal, and with an estimated 3000+ residents affected. A total of 172 crew hours were completed as "In Kind Match" on this project..

• Del Norte County Community Chipper Program: 2BHUU1CODEN1

This 2002 Wildland Urban Interface grant, in the amount of \$27,658.00 funded through the Bureau of Land Management, was used to purchase a chipper, and supply crews to chip brush and woody debris that residents had removed from around their homes in prioritized high fire risk areas within Del Norte County. Additional target areas within the county that received high public use were also done. The grant project was completed in March 2004, with a total of 150 acres chipped, 100+ homes protected by brush removal, and with an estimated 1500+ residents affected. A total of 120 crew hours were completed as "In Kind Match" on this project.

Cathey Road Fire Safe Improvement Project:

Categorically Exempt Project/Minor alterations to the land/Class 4 14 CCR 15304(i) This project is located along Cathey Road, approximately 1.5 miles north of Miranda, Humboldt County. The project goal was the reduction of understory vegetation within 200 feet of Cathey Road and associated side roads serving two or more residences. The intent was to reduce fuel loading adjacent to Cathey Road, providing emergency egress and a fire fighting control point in the event of wildfire. Brush was cut using hand crews and chipped. Work was done on lands managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Crescent City / Hwy 101 Fuel Reduction Project VMP: (RX-North-045-HUU)

This project located just south of the community of Crescent City in Del Norte County, on US Hwy 101. It encompasses a total of 10 acres owned and managed by Hambro Timber Products. The project was a cooperative venture with the Del Norte County Fire Safe Council, who supplies the chipper, and the landowner. It was designed to reduce the ladder fuels in the area adjacent to local beaches, and along the Hwy 101 corridor that is frequently subjected to illegal fireworks during the July 4th period, as well as numerous indigent encampments throughout the year.

On Going Projects

- Humboldt Redwoods State Park VMP: Understory Burns
- Stewart Ranch VMP: Grazing Land Improvement
- Redwood National Park VMP: Prairie Burns
- Klamath River Drainage VMP: Cultural Burns
- Shelter Cove Fuel Break: **3WHUU2SHELTERCOVEFB**

This 2003 Western Urban Interface grant in the amount of \$25,904.00 funded through the United States Forest Service for the development of 50' buffer zone (shaded fuel break, 25' from the centerline of road to shoulder, on both sides of Shelter Cove Road) from the Ettersburg Road / Shelter Cove Road Junction to the community of Shelter Cove. A distance of approximately 8 to 10 miles. Vegetation was cut and then chipped by inmate crews, in conjunction with Humboldt County Road Department personnel who dealt with traffic control. The project provided an area of defendable space in the event of wildfire, while improving egress and ingress for the community of Shelter Cove, for both civilian and emergency vehicle traffic. Approximately 6 miles of the shaded fuelbreak were completed, as well as 100 crew days of "In Kind Match" work.

• Arcata Community Forest Fuel Break: **3BHUU1ARCATAFB2**

This 2003 Western Urban Interface grant in the amount of \$34,489.00 funded through the Bureau of Land Management to develop a 100' shaded fuelbreak around the Arcata Community Forest. The project will improved the ingress and egress of both civilian and

emergency vehicles in the vent of wildfire and other emergencies, thus providing improved safety for fire fighters as well as the surrounding population. The fuelbreak will potentially reduce suppression costs by slowing the potential spread of fire into adjoining properties, thus providing defendable space. Due to the build up of residential housing surrounding the forest, this type of action has seemed the prudent thing to do. Arcata is registered as a "Community at Risk" on the State of California list. The project has been completed, with a total of 60+ acres chipped, 150+ homes protected, affecting approximately 1500+ people, and using 100 crew days as "In Kind Match" work.

Planned Projects

Johnson Ridge Shaded Fuel Break VMP

This is a joint venture VMP with the Del Norte County Fire Safe Council and the Simpson Timber Company. The VMP will construct an 11 mile long shaded fuelbreak along Johnson Ridge, that will separate Redwood National Park lands with lands owned by Simpson Timber Company. Removed vegetation will be either chipped or burned.

• Wilder Ridge Shaded Fuel Break: WUI 2004 BLM Grant Proposal

This grant proposal for \$100,000.00 to construct a shaded fuelbreak approximately 150' wide extending the length of Telegraph and Wilder ridges, along Ettersburg Road and Wilder ridge Roads, between the communities of Whitethorn and Honeydew in southwestern Humboldt County. The fuelbreak would cover approximately 15 miles / 270 acres, and would connect with two other fuel breaks in the area to create a perpetual fuelbreak the length of the Mattole watershed. It was also the hoped that local people could be contracted to do the work on private lands, leaving the public land segments to be worked by inmate crews.

The Unit pulled the proposal after it found that business practices would not allow the contracting with local contractor without opening the project to statewide bidding. The Unit also tried to change the grant scope, thus transferring the grant to a local Fire Safe Council, enabling the FSC to implement and manage the grant, but were told that could not be done.

• Humboldt-Del Norte Unit Assessment: WUI 2004 USFS Proposal

This grant proposal for \$72,450.00 will aid in the collection of data from throughout the Unit comprised of Humboldt, Del Norte, and southwestern Trinity counties. This data will be used to assess areas of need, plan projects to mitigate problem areas, and inform and educate the public at large of the potential fire problems within the Unit that could result in loss of life and property. The data that is gathered will be used by a variety of agencies within the Unit to help form a consolidated effort in the formation of fuel removal projects, fuelbreaks, and greenbelt projects.

The Unit was notified in May of 2004 that the grant project was not funded.

• Humboldt County Chipper Program/Phase II: WUI 2005 BLM Proposal

This grant proposal in the amount of \$36,225.00 will the continue the Humboldt County chipping program started in 2002. Target areas will be assessed, and prioritized for need. 100 crew days have been allotted for cutting and chipping vegetation to improve egress and ingress for the public and emergency personnel and vehicles.

Del Norte County Chipper Program/Phase II: WUI 2005 BLM Proposal

This grant proposal in the amount of \$24,524.00 will continue the del Norte County chipping program started in 2002. Target areas will be assessed, and prioritized for need. 50 crew days have been allotted for cutting and chipping of vegetation to improve egress and ingress for the public and emergency personnel and vehicles.

Conferences and Programs:

The Humboldt-Del Norte Unit was host and participant to several conferences that were held in the Unit in 2003. Among those are the ones listed below:

• SONCAL: Southern Oregon-Northern California Wildfire Council

The annual SONCAL conference was held at the River Lodge in Fortuna, California on April 29th and 30th, 2003. The conference centered on "Volunteerism, the Backbone of Fire Protection". Presenters discussed the importance of volunteers and how they help reduce wildfire risk. CDF Director Andrea Tuttle gave the welcoming comments.

• Burning Issues: Review of the Honeydew and Canoe Creek Fires

"How can we be better prepared?" was the issue of this workshop held on November 1st, 2003 in Redway's Mateel Community Center. Federal, State and Local agencies and Fire Departments gathered to present the issues of what happened before, during and after the season's large fire suppression activities.

North Coast Firewise Community Workshop

Cooperating Federal, State, and Local agencies and fire departments came together to bring a Firewise Workshop to the North Coast. It was held at the River Lodge Convention Center in Fortuna on November 18th and 19th, 2003. Professionals from private sectors as well as government and the public at large were invited to form working groups that tackled fire planning issues to help make their communities a safer place from the threat of fire. CDF Director Andrea Tuttle gave opening comments.

CDF NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



HUMBOLDT-DEL NORTE UNIT

CONTACT, Cricket Konopacki Information Officer Humboldt -Del Norte (707) 726-1225

PEI-EASE DATE: April 15, 2003

WILDFIRE COUNCIL MEETS

The Southern Oregon-Northern California Wildfire Council (SONCAL) will hold their annual conference in Fortuna at the River Lodge on April 29 and 30, 2003. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Unit Chief K. R. "Dick" Goings is the event chairperson.

An introductory welcome from Andrea Tuttle, Director, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, will open the event on Tuesday.

This year's conference theme is, "Volunteerism, the Backbone of Fire Protection." Presenters will discuss the importance of volunteers and how they help reduce wildfire risk. Without these many dedicated people lending their time and talent, it would be impossible to accomplish the job that's now being done.

Topics will include:

Volunteerism in fire suppression Volunteer and paid fire departments Community Fire Safe Councils Fire department cooperation Ham radio operators, what they can do

The event closes with a demonstration of the "Spider," a controlled-skid trainer. This fuu-sized fire engine simulates a driver's losing traction on a curve, teaching safe corrective steering. This is the only unit of this type in the western United States.

The SONCAL conference leads up to Wildfire Awareness Week, May 5-11 2003. As fire departments prepare for wildland flre season, residents are asked to get their homes ready. Do your part. Clear defensible space around your home and give your fire department a fighting chance. Together we can reduce the damage caused by wildfires.

Burning Issues

Review of the Honeydew and Canoe Creek Fires How we can be better prepared?



November 1, 2003 9:30-4:00 Mateel Community Center

An opportunity for community members, resource managers and agency representatives to discuss the recent Humboldt County fires and how we can be better prepared for the next one. Representatives from CDF, BLM, State Parks, volunteer fire departments, and the media will give a thorough overview of the development and suppression of the fires and be available to answer questions. Fire Safe displays, photos, maps and handouts will be available. Meet your neighbors and help to form action plans for the future.

	What Happened
9:30-10:00	Registration and viewing of displays
10:00-10:15	Welcome
10:15-10:30	Historical role of fire in north coast forests
10:30-10:45	Fire suppression tactics and terms
10:45-11:50	Overview of the two fires, lessons learned and key observations
11:50-12:45	Q and A with the panel of presenters
12:45- 1:30	Lunch and poster session
	What we learned and how can we be better prepared next time.
1:30-2:30	Homeowner Preparedness.
2:30-3:30	How to strengthen local and County efforts?
3:30-4:00	Wrap up, identify next steps, needs, resources, and educational opportunities

For more information and to register to ensure that there are lunches and handouts for everyone please call UC Cooperative Extension 445-7351. The workshop is free, small charge for lunch.

Sponsored by University of California Cooperative Extension, Institute for Sustainable Forestry, KMUD, Mateel Community Center, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council, Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council, and the Southern Humboldt Volunteer Fire Chiefs.



Then please join us for the

North Coast FIREWISE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

November 18-19, 2003

Riverlodge Conference Center, 1800 Riverwalk Drive, Fortuna, California

Learn how to help your community be a Firewise Community

Registration is only \$50 for the entire workshop, including food. Some scholarships are available. To register, go to http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sixrivers/fire/firewise/, or call Kathi Hendricks at the Humboldt Fire Prevention District, 445-4900 by November 1st.

Local Workshop Coordinating Committee:



California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Del Norte County Fire Safe Council, Humboldt County Fire Safe Council, Humboldt County Planning Department, Humboldt Fire Protection District, Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council, Six Rivers National Forest, Trinity County Fire Safe Council, Trinity County Resource Conservation District, Watershed Research and Training Center





CDF Director Andrea Tuttle Keynote speaker



Typical break out group planning session.